

**Deerfield, IL** - Congressman Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) congratulated three students and a teacher from Stevenson High School Friday for their role in helping bring about the first murder indictment in the so-called "Mississippi Burning" case.

"There is no time limit on justice and justice is finally coming to Mississippi," said Kirk, who co-sponsored a concurrent resolution last year asking the Department of Justice to investigate the 1964 murders of three civil rights volunteers.

Yesterday, a Mississippi grand jury indicted 80-year-old Edgar Ray Killen with the murders of James E. Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman. The three men were volunteers for "Freedom Summer," a project dedicated to helping African Americans in Mississippi earn equal rights. The indictment marked the first murder charges in the case.

"This is a cold, dark chapter in American history and it is important we bring those responsible to justice," Kirk said.

Allison Nichols, Brittany Saltiel and Sara Siegal, with the help of teacher Barry Bradford, produced an award-winning documentary titled, "We Are Not Afraid." The film re-examined the case and prompted the Mississippi Attorney General to open a fresh investigation.

Kirk plans on recognizing the students' accomplishments on the House floor when Congress reconvenes.

"These students are shining examples of what young people can accomplish if they are determined," Kirk said. "These young women are true inspirations. As their congressman, I could not be more proud."

The Mississippi slayings took place during a time when hundreds of idealistic young people flooded into the South to educate African-Americans about voting rights. The three friends disappeared but were later found beaten and shot.

After a massive federal investigation, seven men were convicted by an all-white jury on federal conspiracy charges in 1967, but none of the men faced murder charges and none served more than six years in prison. Killen went free after the trial.

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